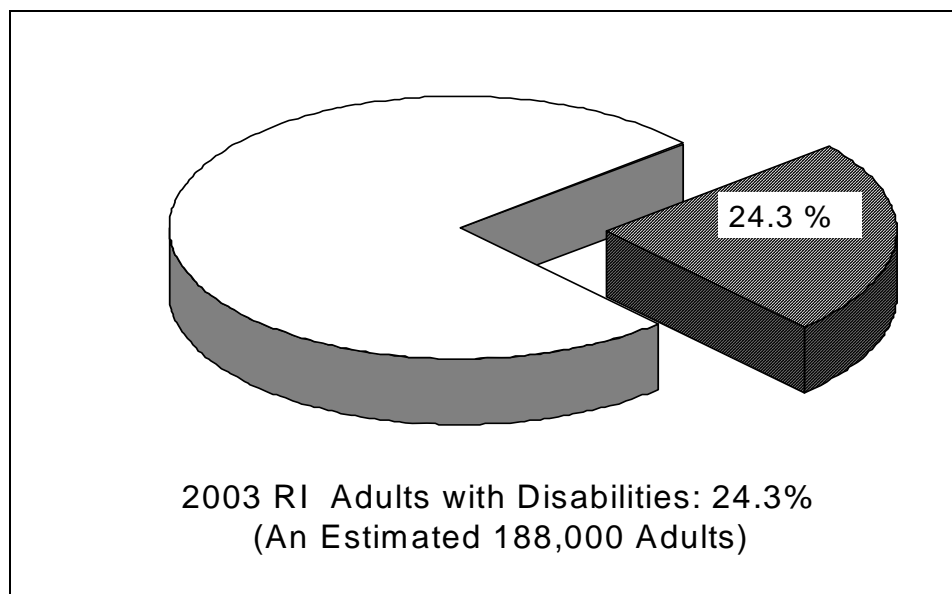

Rhode Island **DISABILITY FACTS** in 2003

An Update of the “*Rhode Island Disability Chartbook*” with the 2003 Rhode Island BRFSS data

November 2004

- ❖ ***Nearly one in four RI non-institutionalized adults (24.3%; an estimated 188,000 adults) had experienced some kind of disability because of any impairment or health problem (Figure 1).***

Figure 1. Estimated Prevalence of Disability among RI Adults, 2003



Data Source:

This brief update presents the results from an analysis of the 2003 Rhode Island Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (RIBRFSS) survey data. The RIBRFSS, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is an ongoing, statewide, random-digit-dialed telephone survey of the noninstitutionalized RI adults aged 18 and older to monitor the prevalence of key health- and safety-related behaviors. The 2003 RIBRFSS survey consisted of 4,053 telephone interviews with extensive information on disability/quality of life.

Case Definition of Disability:

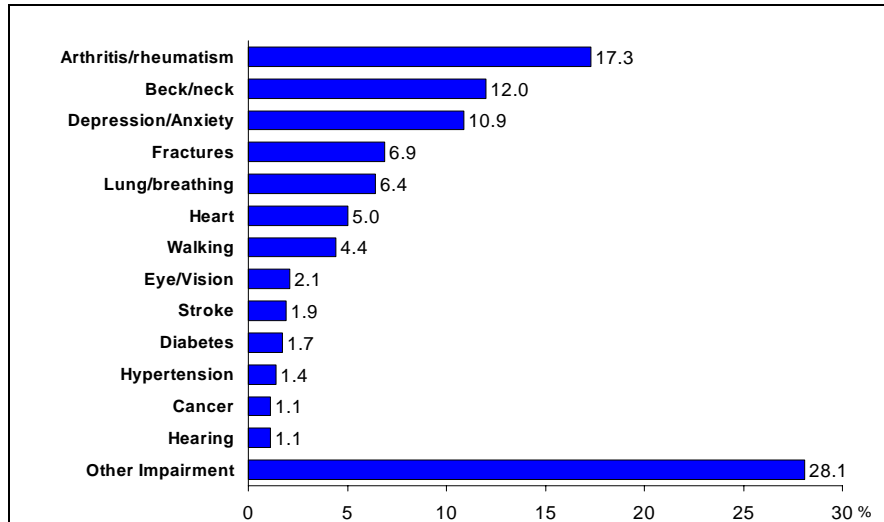
Persons who answered “yes” to any of the following questions were defined as having a disability:

- Are you limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems? (18.0%)
- Do you now have any health problem that requires you to use special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone? (5.1%)
- Because of any impairment or health problem, do you have any trouble learning, remembering, or concentrating? (10.5%)

Major Health Problem

- ❖ **The most frequently reported impairments or health problems were: arthritis/rheumatism (17.3%), back/neck problems (12.0%), depression/anxiety (10.9%), fractures (6.9%), lung/breathing problems (6.4%), and heart problems (5.0%) (Figure 2).**

Figure 2. Major Impairment or Health Problem Limiting Activities*
Rhode Island Adults, 2003



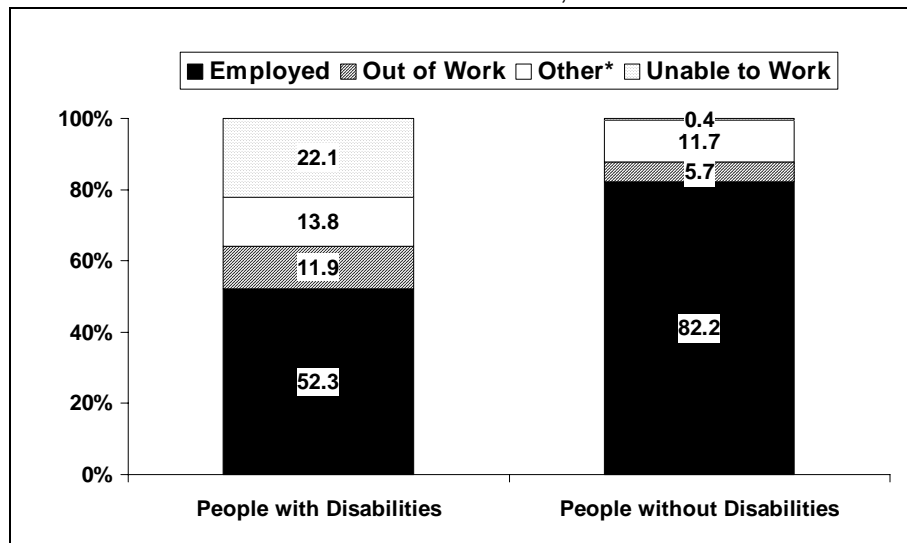
* Among those who were classified as having a disability.

Note: Hearing problems might be under-represented because of telephone interviews.

Employment Status

- ❖ **Among working age adults (21-64 years of age), 52.3% of people with disabilities were either employed for wage or self-employed, compared to 82.2% of people without disabilities (Figure 3).**

Figure 3. Employment Status of Working Age Adults (21-64) by Disability Status
Rhode Island Adults, 2003



* Other includes home makers, students, and the retired.

Comparison of Health Risks

❖ **Health Status**

People with disabilities were much more likely than people without disabilities to report **poor general health** (34.7% vs. 6.7%), **poor physical health** (27.8% vs. 3.8%), and **poor mental health** (24.6% vs. 5.5%) (Figure 4).

❖ **Emotional Support/Life Satisfaction**

People with disabilities were more likely to report that they got **insufficient emotional support** (34.2% vs. 18.7%) and were **dissatisfied with life** (19.5% vs. 4.1%).

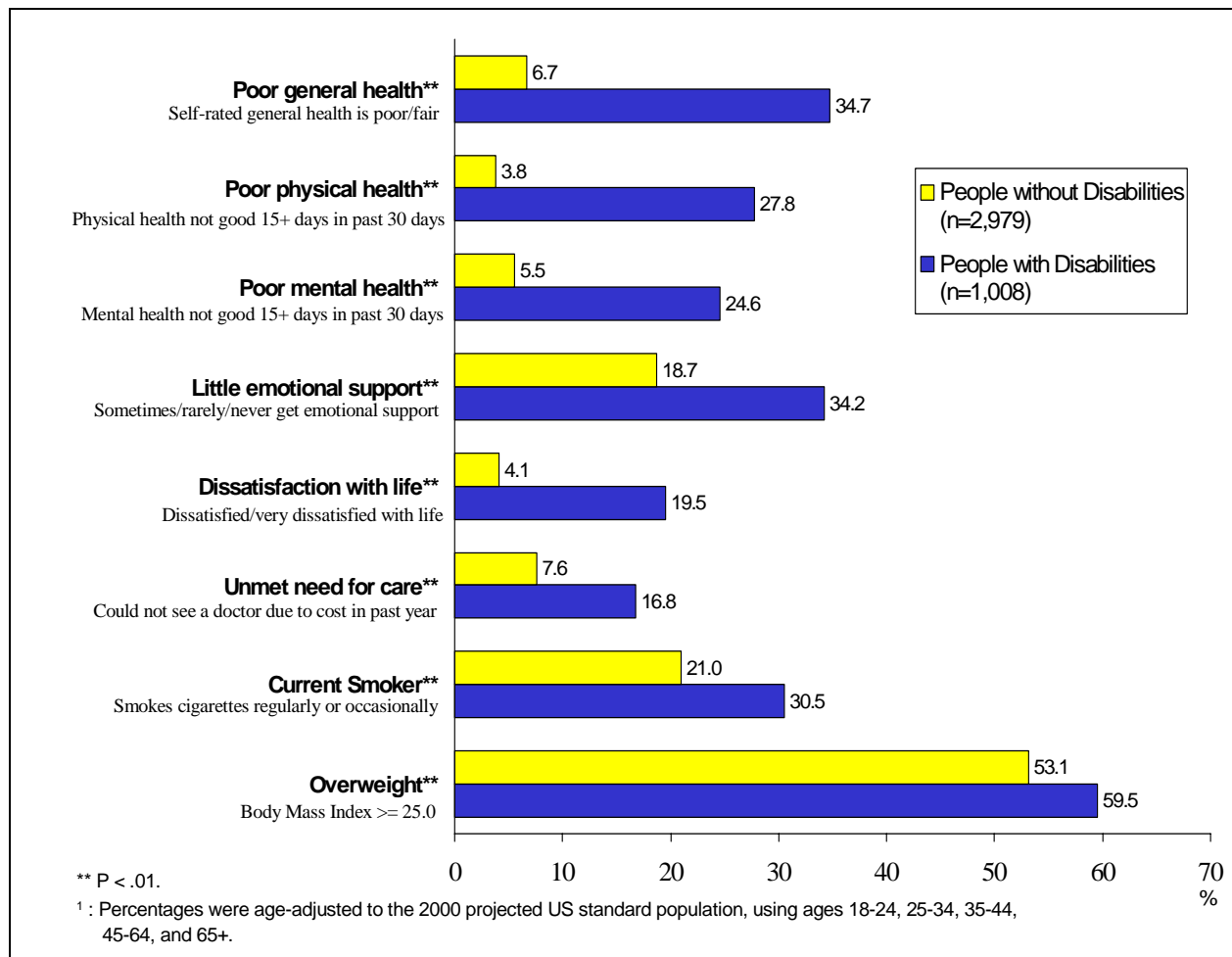
❖ **Unmet Need for Medical Care**

People with disabilities were more likely to report that there was a time during the past year they **could not see a doctor** because of the cost (16.8% vs. 7.6%).

❖ **Behavioral Risks**

People with disabilities were more likely to be **current smokers** (30.5% vs. 21.0%), and more likely to be **overweight** (59.5% vs. 53.1%).

Figure 4. Comparison of Health Risks by Disability Status
Rhode Island Adults, 2003
(Age-Adjusted Percentage¹)



Socio-Demographic Characteristics

- ❖ ***The prevalence of disability was higher among the elderly, minorities, persons with less education and persons with lower incomes than their counterparts (Table 1).***

Table 1. Estimated Prevalence of Disability by Socio-Demographic Characteristics
Rhode Island Adults, 2003
(in percentages, with 95% confidence interval limits)

	Unadjusted Percent	Age-Adjusted Percent ¹
All Persons	24.3 ± 1.6	23.7 ± 1.6
Age		
18-44	17.8 ± 2.3	-
45-64	27.3 ± 2.7	-
65-74	29.0 ± 4.9	-
75 or Older	41.4 ± 5.6	-
Gender		
Male	22.1 ± 2.4	22.1 ± 2.3
Female	26.3 ± 2.1	25.1 ± 2.1
Race/Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	23.8 ± 1.7	23.0 ± 1.7
non-White or Hispanic	25.2 ± 4.7	29.7 ± 4.8
Education (25+ years)		
Less than H.S.	40.0 ± 5.6	39.9 ± 6.2
H.S. Graduate/GED	26.0 ± 3.0	24.8 ± 3.0
Some College	25.7 ± 3.3	25.3 ± 3.2
College Graduate	19.3 ± 2.5	19.8 ± 2.6
Household Income		
<\$15,000	41.5 ± 6.2	46.6 ± 5.8
\$15,000-\$24,999	31.9 ± 4.8	32.6 ± 5.1
\$25,000-\$49,999	25.6 ± 3.1	25.2 ± 3.1
>=\$50,000	15.3 ± 2.2	17.5 ± 2.9

¹ Percentages were age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population, using ages 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-64, and 65+.

Rhode Island Disability and Health Program:
<http://www.health.ri.gov/family/disability>

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This publication series will provide a foundation for developing policies/programs to promote the health and wellness of people with disabilities.